

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A data management system that communicates with a client terminal, the data server system comprising:
 - a virtual address connection defining a network address to which the client terminal sends a request reflecting a function to be performed;
 - a plurality of server devices, each capable of performing the server function requested by the client terminal, and wherein each of the plurality of server devices has access to a common storage device; and
 - a load balancer, associated with the virtual address connection, for receiving the request and for selecting one of the plurality of server devices to perform the requested function; wherein the load balancer routes the request to the selected server device to perform the requested function, and wherein the selected server device accesses the common storage device to perform the request.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of server devices operate in parallel.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the request is a data file request and wherein the client terminal sends all requests to the virtual address connection.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein a plurality of client terminals send respective requests to the virtual address connection, and wherein the load balancer determines the one of the plurality of server devices that will perform the server function requested by each of the plurality of client terminals.

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5. The system of claim 1, wherein the load balancer randomly determines the server device that will perform the server function.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the load balancer determines the server device that will perform the server function according to a predetermined rotational order.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the load balancer determine the server device that will perform the function based on a current processing load of each server device.

8. The system of claim 1, further including:
a data share unit for preventing multiple server devices from simultaneously accessing the same storage location of the server storage device.

9. A method for operating a data management system that communicates with a client terminal, the method comprising:
receiving a request for performance of a server function from a client terminal, wherein the server process request is received at a virtual address connection defining a network address to which the client terminal sends the request for performance of the server function;

selecting one of a plurality of server devices to perform the requested function, wherein each of the plurality of server devices is capable of performing the requested server function, and wherein each of the plurality of server devices has access to a common storage device;

forwarding the client request to the selected server device;
accessing, using the selected server device, the storage device to perform the request; and
forwarding, based on the performed request, a server response to the client terminal.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the plurality of server devices operate in parallel.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the request is a data file request, and wherein receiving the server process request includes:

receiving all data file requests from the client terminal at the virtual address connection.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein receiving the server process request includes receiving requests from a plurality of client terminals at the virtual address connection, and wherein determining one of the plurality of server devices further includes determining each of the plurality of server devices that will perform one of the server functions requested by each of the plurality of client terminals.

13. The method of claim 9, wherein determining one of the plurality of server devices further includes:

randomly determining the server device that will perform the server function.

14. The method of claim 9, wherein determining one of the plurality of server devices further includes:

determining the server device that will perform the server function according to a predetermined rotational order.

15. The method of claim 9, wherein determining one of the plurality of server devices further includes:

determining the server device that will perform the server function based on a current processing load of each server device.

16. The method of claim 9, further including:

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